A

SESSION

OF

PAINTERS,

Occaſion'd by the

DEATH

Of the late

Sir *GODFREY KNELLER*,

Inſcrib'd to his Widow,

The Lady KNELLER.

Each Heav'nly Piece unweary'd we compare.
Match *Raphael*'s Grace with thy lov'd *Guido*'s Air,
Carracci's Strength, *Corregio*'s ſofter Line,
Paulo's free Stroke, and *Titian*'s Warmth divine.
Yet ſtill how faint, by Precept, is expreſs'd,
The living Image in the Painter's Breaſt?
Thence endleſs Streams of fair Ideas flow,
Strike in the Sketch, or in the Picture glow. P.

LONDON:

Printed for J. ROBERTS, at the *Oxford-Arms* in *Warwick-Lane*.
MDCCXXV. (Price 4 *d.*)

BRITISH MUSEUM

A SESSION OF PAINTERS.

I.

MOURN, *England*, mourn, ſince KNELLER is no more,
Who ſhall his Place ſupply?
What *Genius* can the mighty *Art* reſtore,
Or muſt it vacant lie?
Alas! already is the Laurel giv'n,
Before APELLES can deſcend from Heav'n.

II.

But ſoon the **God* with all his *Train* came down,
And thus his Will proclaim'd,
I come (ſaid he) to give the vacant Crown:
He muſt by *Me* be nam'd.
He that uſurps it ne'er was known to me,
Merit ſhall wear the *Wreath*, by my Decree.

III. No

* You may obſerve the Author, here, makes uſe of his poetical Licence, in making a new Divinity free of *Parnaſſus*.

III.

No ſooner had the *God* theſe Words declar'd,
But ſtraight whole Troops came in,
Some wond'rous fine, and ſome diſtreſs'd appear'd,
Yet vainly *Great* within;
Theſe noiſy Sons of Fame a War declare,
Pallats and Pencils brandiſh in the Air:

IV.

APELLES ſtarting at this num'rous ſight,
With angry Voice, thus ſaid:
To flouriſh Signs, and Sign-poſts is your right,
Be gone, and mind your Trade;
Let *Candidates* of *Worth* have room to plead,
None but of *Worth* ſhall the deceas'd ſucceed.

V.

A ſly, ſhort, cringing Creature firſt appear'd,
And cry'd, with abject Mein,
Great KNELLER was my *Tutor*, moſt rever'd!
I wip'd his Pencils clean.
APELLES gravely told th'induſtrious Thing,
Tho' you can't *Paint*, I hear that you can *Sing*.

VI.

This ſaid: Grave *Ph*——— bow'd with courtly Air,
And vainly thus laid claim;
A *Genius* only ſhou'd this *Laurel* wear,
Some choſen Son of Fame ———
APELLES ſtop'd him ſhort, and frowning ſaid,
Preſumptuous Man —— be ſatisfy'd with Bread.

VII.

H——r, a Famous City *Candidate*,
Came jutting out his Breech,
Wiſh not (*Apelles* cry'd) a better Fate,
Thou daubing taſteleſs Wretch;
Content thyſelf to pleaſe ill-judging Sinners,
To get their Money and devour their Dinners.

VIII.

Stiff, as his Works, elaborate *G——n* came,
And thus began to ſue;
The Greateſt Nobles long have known my Fame,
Nor is it ſtrange to you?
The *God* reply'd: Thy Hand preferr'd ſhou'd be,
Had it more Praiſe from Others, leſs from Thee.

IX.

A Rich Old *Sage*, to prove his boaſted Skill,
To draw a Portrait try'd;
When, ſtrange! his Pencil chang'd into a Quill,
Apelles, ſmiling, cry'd——
You *Paint* almoſt as ill as you *Indite*,
And yet you *Draw* much worſe than you can *Write*.

X.

Apelles ſmil'd to ſee his fav'rite *Son**.
Come preſſing thro' the throng;
Proceed (cry'd out the *God*) as you've begun,
Forget the Dance and Song:
With haſte thy rough unpoliſh'd ways refine,
And grow the Lady's Darling, as thou'rt mine.

* *El——s.*

XI.

The *God*'s all-piercing Eye ſoon *Smy—t* ſaw,
With *Dy--r* by his ſide,
Thy Merit, *Smy---t*, juſt Applauſe will draw,
Apelles ſmiling cry'd:
In *Dy--r* both the *Siſter Arts* agree,
To pleaſe in *Painting*, and in *Poetry*.

XII.

Apelles wav'd his Hand, with graceful Air,
To an old modeſt * *Sage*, * *D——l.*
'Tis juſt (he cry'd) that I this Truth declare
To this ill-judging Age;
Thy Judgment I approve; go on! be Great!
'Tis ſure ſome Merit well to imitate.

XIII.

Here paus'd the *God*—— and viewing well each rank,
Thus ſpake with eager Voice,
Why do I miſs my Fav'rite *Van——k*?
He long has been my Choice:
Oft have I ſaid, if He with Kneller's care
Wou'd Progreſs make, He might His loſs repair.

XIV.

But ſoon quick Envy reach'd *Apelles* Ears,
And bab'ling joyful told,
Want, is the reaſon why he not appears,
Not *Vanity*, but *Gold*:
'Tis Wealth alone that builds the ſureſt Name;
He feeds on Airy Food, that lives on Fame.

XV.

Upon *Apelles'* Brow there ſat a Cloud,
Which his Diſpleaſure ſpoke;
Slowly he roſe, and to the gaping Crowd
He thus his Silence broke:
Ye *Candidates* for Fame, Attention give,
From my impartial Hand your Fates receive.

XVI.

Some few I know, who are not in this Throng,
Whoſe Merits I approve,
Nor wou'd I do their modeſt Prudence wrong,
Becauſe they have not ſtrove,
With vain impertinent Attempts, to ſhare
A Wreath, they know they are not fit to wear.

XVII.

Obſerve my KNELLER, mark his Virtues well,
How juſt a *Draught* he drew;
He ſtrove *Vandike* and *Lilly* to excel:
His comprehenſive View
Held all the Noble Theory compleat,
Wiſe, yet not vain, exalted, yet diſcreet.

XVIII.

His matchleſs Art, by Nature's force diſplay'd,
Are in thoſe Portraits ſhown;
Obſerve that fine Expreſſion! Light and Shade!
The Features well are known!
His Men with aweful Grace the Eye controul,
His Women touch the Heart, and charm the Soul.

XIX.

Now where's that vain ambitious Man, that will
With mighty KNELLER vie?
And not confeſs his much ſuperiour Skill,
Whoſe Works will never die?
But oh! no Merit, Wealth, nor Pow'r can ſave
The Greateſt Mortal from the certain Grave.

XX.

My fav'rite Sons perſue his Tracts with care,
And truly Nature know,
You muſt his Taſte enjoy, his Judgment ſhare,
And with his Spirit glow,
'Till one thus ſhines to match the mighty dead,
The Wreath ſhall ſtay on the *De Facto*'s Head.

This ſaid, he upwards took his airy Flight,
Streaking the Cloudy Paths with Beams of Light.

FINIS.

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